



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

Johnny Sutton, U.S. Attorney

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

www.usdoj.gov/usao/txw/index.html

Shana Jones, Special Assistant

Daryl Fields, Public Information Officer

(210) 384-7452

September 2, 2003

**AUSTIN GRAND JURY INDICTS TWO WOMEN ON CHARGES OF HUMAN
TRAFFICKING OF MINORS**

United States Attorney Johnny Sutton announced today that 32 year-old Maricela Martinez-Uresti, a.k.a. Maricela Uresti-Martinez and 19 year-old Violeta Juanita De Hoyos-Hernandez, both citizens of Mexico, were indicted on four counts of Sex Trafficking of Children, Transportation of Minors for Sexual Activity, Conspiracy to Smuggle, Transport and Harbor Illegal Aliens and Importation of Aliens for Immoral Purposes.

According to the indictment, beginning in November 2002 and continuing through May 2003, the defendants participated in a conspiracy to recruit and smuggle female aliens under the age of 18 years from Mexico into the United States. Once the girls reach Austin, they were held against their will and forced to engage in prostitution to repay the smuggling fee.

The defendants were arrested by the Austin Police Department on May 14, 2003. The Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement joined the investigation after the arrest. Both defendants have been in custody on state charges since their arrest. If convicted, both women face a maximum 55 years in federal prison and a \$1 million fine. This case is being investigated by the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Austin Police Department. Assistant United States Attorney Gerald Carruth is prosecuting the case for the government.

An indictment is a formal accusation of criminal conduct, not evidence of guilt. Defendants are presumed innocent unless and until convicted through due process of law.